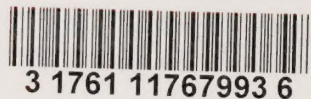


# RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS



Socio-economic Series

Issue 45

## MEETING SENIORS' HOUSING NEEDS: A GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS

### Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to help organizations, such as service clubs, religious organizations, ethnic organizations, neighbourhood groups and retirees' organizations, understand how they can influence the provision of seniors' housing in their communities.

It is intended to help organizations of all types and backgrounds, from the brand new to the well-established. Its contents have been based in part on input received from seniors' organizations all across the country, including some which have developed dozens of housing projects, some working on their first, and some which make their contribution in other ways.

The guide also contains an annotated bibliography and a list of useful contacts that will help organizations quickly find more information.

The guide is a companion piece to other CMHC publications and products:

- **SENIORS** is a computer program designed to help in planning housing and support services. SENIORS provides an extremely useful set of tools for assessing the needs of a community's senior citizens for housing, support services, and transportation, and to plan future options to satisfy those needs.
- **Housing Choices for Older Canadians** describes in some detail the different ways that seniors' housing needs can be met in the community.
- **Housing for Older Canadians** is a comprehensive guide to planning, designing, developing, marketing and managing housing for people 55 and older.
- **Housing Options for People with Dementia** is a guide designed to increase public awareness of the types and range of housing options that can be made available to people with dementia.

These publications, and others, are referenced in the annotated bibliography.

### Findings

The development of housing projects is by no means the only way that organizations can make meaningful contributions. The guide also discusses some of the other ways that groups can make a difference.

This guide does not provide detailed instructions on how to go about building or managing seniors' housing. Rather, it provides a framework for action: a way of thinking about and approaching the resolution of seniors' housing needs in order to make a difference to the lives of seniors in their communities.

The guide is divided into three parts:

**Part I - An Overview of Seniors' Housing** describes:

- seniors' housing preferences and the overwhelming desire of most seniors to stay home;
- the types of retirement communities which are most successful;
- options such as customized mobile home parks, congregate care, assisted living, continuum of care campuses, and development of services to facilitate aging in place.

It then describes seniors' equity and tenure options:

- individual home and condominium ownership;
- rental apartments, including nonprofit, equity cooperatives, life lease communities, Abbeyfield houses, and garde suites and accessory apartments ("granny flats").

It then examines how seniors' housing is developed and managed in Canada, including who is involved and the role each plays:

- land owners;
- community-based nonprofit organizations;
- developers;
- development consultants;
- architects;
- municipal planners;
- lenders;
- mortgage insurers;
- builders;
- lawyers;



HOME TO CANADIANS  
Canada



- real estate agents;
- property managers; and
- provincial government agencies.

Finally it examines what a community group with an interest in the housing needs of seniors can do:

- a needs assessment;
- provision of services;
- housing registry;
- project management;
- fund raising;
- project development;
- providing services to those in existing housing;
- community development; and
- working with politicians.

**Part 2 - A Framework for Action** will help your group formulate a strategy and set attainable goals. It discusses how to get organized, including legal issues and the importance of including a variety of skills on the committee dealing with seniors' housing issues. It includes tips on holding productive meetings and dealing with group members' resistance, impatience and burnout.

It then provides suggestions for fund raising from:

- provincial housing agencies;
- local foundations;
- endowment funds;
- charities;
- local financial institutions;
- religious institutions and service clubs;
- chambers of commerce;
- lotteries; and
- CMHC.

It provides some advice on how to conduct a needs assessment and a survey to increase the group's understanding of seniors' housing needs in your community.

Finally, it examines what to consider in establishing a global direction, identifying attainable goals and adopting a strategy and an action plan.

**Part 3 - Ideas for Action** reviews three broad approaches to meeting seniors' housing needs that could be used by community groups throughout Canada:

- working with the housing sector, including research, advocacy, and providing information to seniors;
- working in partnership, including various informal ways of influencing the development process - working with builders,

developers, and architects; conducting a proposal call; assisting other groups - and more formal types of partnerships, such as joint ventures;

- developing a project yourself, including the steps to follow - site selection, design issues, feasibility, marketing, financing, construction, occupancy and property management.

**Project Manager:** Steven Mennill

**Research Report:** Meeting Seniors' Housing Needs: A Guide for Community Groups

**Research Consultants:** DKM Housing Consultants, with research assistance provided by Anglais et Associés.

A full report on this project is available from the Canadian Housing Information Centre at the address below.

### Housing Research at CMHC

Under Part IX of the National Housing Act, the Government of Canada provides funds to CMHC to conduct research into the social, economic and technical aspects of housing and related fields, and to undertake the publishing and distribution of the results of this research.

This fact sheet is one of a series intended to inform you of the nature and scope of CMHC's research report.

The **Research Highlights** fact sheet is one of a wide variety of housing related publications produced by CMHC.

For a complete list of **Research Highlights**, or for more information on CMHC housing research and information, please contact:

The Canadian Housing Information Centre  
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation  
700 Montreal Road  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0P7

Telephone: (613) 748-2367  
FAX: (613) 748-2098

**OUR WEB SITE ADDRESS:** <http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/Research>